

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1083

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 5936

EYES ONLY FOR KUBISCH FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, PE, US

SUBJECT: VISIT OF PRESIDENT VELASCO TO THE U.S.

REF: LIMA 5881

DURING YESTERDAY AFTERNOON'S MEETING WITH MINISTER DE LA FLOR, LATTER CONFIRMED PRESIDENT VELASCO'S CONCERN OVER PHYSICAL CONDITION AS REASON FOR NOT ACCEPTING PRESIDENT NIXON'S INVITATION FOR AUGUST VISIT. HE SAID VELASCO SUFFERED SOMEWHAT OF A PSYCHOLOGICAL SETBACK IN REHABILITATION EFFORT DURING ECHEVERRIA VISIT. DURING LUNCHEON MEETING WITH ECHEVERRIA VELASCO LOST BALANCE AND CAME NEAR TO EMBARRASSING FALL ON INCLINED RAMP AND WAS ONLY SAVED FROM THIS EVENTUALITY WITH THE HELP OF PEOPLE CROWDED AROUND HIM. HE SIMPLY DOES NOT WANT TO GO TO WASHINGTON BEFORE HE HAS BETTER CONTROL OVER ARTIFICIAL LEG. DE LA FLOR ADDED, HOWEVER, HIS OPINION THAT VELASCO DEFINITELY HOPES TO MAKE VISIT IN FUTURE WHEN HE FEELS SURE OF HIS PHYSICAL MOVEMENTS AND SAID HE IS WORKING DILIGENTLY ON REHABILITATION EXERCISES TO ACHIEVE THIS. HE FURTHER SAID HE EXPECTED TO DISCUSS THIS MATTER AT LENGTH WITH VELASCO EARLY NEXT WEEK AFTER WHICH HE WOULD GIVE ME A MORE PRECISE EVALUATION OF VELASCO'S HOPES AND INTENTIONS IN THIS REGARD. IN ANY CASE, A TRIP, IF ANY, WOULD APPEAR TO BE MONTHS AWAY. I TOLD DE LA FLOR OF THE LONG LEAD TIME USUALLY REQUIRED FOR SCHEDULING SUCH PRESIDENTIAL VISITS.

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